

## Clouds by uppercasebread

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** College au angst time yay, Gross, Internalized Homophobia, M/M, theres some, theyre in college, this is set ????? somewhere in time prolly like the 90s ish

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Mike Wheeler, Will Byers

**Relationships:** Will Byers/Mike Wheeler

**Status:** In-Progress

**Published:** 2016-12-26

**Updated:** 2018-04-24

**Packaged:** 2022-04-22 04:41:27

**Rating:** Not Rated

**Warnings:** No Archive Warnings Apply

**Chapters:** 5

**Words:** 3,855

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

A few of Mike's encounters with Will at college. Some angst, it gets kinda resolved. I hope you enjoy it!

# 1. Chapter 1

The first encounter started with a complaint. Mike's roommate's complaint, to be specific.

"God, can't they keep their music down? Not everybody wants to listen to the Clash 24/7, assholes!" He scoffed, and Mike rolled his eyes.

"Would it make you feel better if I went and asked them to turn it down?" This was the third or fourth time Mike had heard the complaint, and it was now just as grating as the constant music coming from downstairs.

"Would you?" His roommate asked, grinning toothily at him from across the room.

"If it'll make you shut the hell up, then yes." He stood slowly, his joints cracking in disapproval.

"I'll never speak again!" Mike rolled his eyes a second time, moving to leave the dorm room.

He stepped into the hallway and shut the door softly behind him. The music from downstairs was still clearly audible, pulsing through the floor. Mike wondered why nobody else had complained or said anything, it had been going on for the past week.

Upon reaching the offender's door, he had to pound against it so hard he thought he might break it, or his hand, or both. When it opened, Mike suddenly realized why nobody had said anything. The person standing there made eye contact with him for just a few seconds, and the glare they could give off made Mike want to cry or throw up or kiss them, and he couldn't tell which.

He also realized something else; it was Will who had answered the door. Will, who he had grown up knowing, with a round face and a soft voice, now looked almost the opposite. In aging, his face became more angular, and his hair was shaggier. His frame hadn't changed much, he was still short and thin, but the lingering effects of

the upside down were obvious. Long, thin scars trailed from his collarbone to somewhere underneath his shirt, and Mike's face burned as he realized he knew exactly what they looked like. He had seen them before, they curled around his belly button, and slowly trailed off, almost like some kind of mad surgeon began the procedure but then decided there were better things to do.

This was also who came out to him, who he walked out on because he couldn't process his own thoughts. He remembered the fuzzy feeling at the edges of his mind as he tried to realize the feelings will had confessed to were mirrored in his own thoughts, the ones he had pushed down because they were wrong, he knew they were. Mike swallowed thickly upon realizing this, and tried to push away the memory of how broken Will's face looked.

"What do you want?" Will asked, almost accusatory. Mike tried not to wince, he knew why. He tried to think about why he came down, but his thoughts were muddled together. Will was watching him expectantly, and Mike couldn't look him in the eyes, they were too sharp, too angry.

"D-do you, uh, think you could t-turn your music down? My roommate's having an aneurysm about it." He managed to stutter out, and Will raised his eyebrows, that was all?

"Yeah. alright." He said, and Mike didn't miss the sideways glance he got as Will slid back into his dorm. It made his stomach turn, but he didn't say anything. He sighed and put his head in his hands for a moment, before returning to his own dorm.

Once he made it back, he flopped on his bed and groaned, he couldn't deal with the fact that Will was so close, that someone who he had turned his back to for the same reason they can to him crying, was just downstairs. He sat up and tugged at his hair, ignoring the strands that came out from pure stress.

"What? Were they pissed at you?" His roommate asked, barely paying attention anyway, he was distracted with a textbook.

"Yeah, but not about this. It was somebody I knew, I did a shitty thing to them a couple years ago, they're still pissed." Mike stared

blankly at the ceiling, knowing he was dead panning. He didn't care.

His roommate hummed in a disinterested way and Mike sighed, covering his face and trying not to think about how, for just a split second, Will looked excited to see him. He tried to ignore how his eyes brightened, before he remembered, and dark clouds seemed to come over his expression. Mike resisted the urge to scream in frustration at himself for being such an idiot.

## 2. Chapter 2

### Summary for the Chapter:

SORRY THIS ONES HELLA SHORT I DIDNT HAVE ANY MORE IDEAS AND I DIDNT WANT TO DRAG IT OUT LONGER THAN IT NEEDED

The second time Mike and Will's paths crossed was out on their respective balconies. Mike, to get fresh air from a party, and Will, to ignore another panic attack pushing at his brain and suffocating him. Will saw Mike first, but made no move to communicate. Instead, he took a long drag from a cigarette and made sure to look anywhere but Mike's balcony.

Mike finally noticed him after the smoke and cold air combined with Will already having trouble breathing made him fall into a coughing fit, no less violent than when he would cough up slugs. Mike's eyes wandered to the lower balcony, noting the jacket Will wore having patches strewn about in a seemingly random pattern. Mike knew that Will must have spent hours meticulously designing and redesigning them in different patterns, as that was just the way he was. Not a neat-freak, but he liked things looking nice, and preferred design over chaos.

Will hummed softly to himself, some song he'd long forgotten the words to. It was a distraction, mainly, he wanted to focus on something other than the smothering darkness in his dorm. Strange as it was, the outdoor darkness was better, clearer and sharper. Though it occasionally resembled the upside down, it was more comforting than a dark, empty room, which made him think all too much of his own house inside that place. He shuddered, and continued trying to distract himself.

Mike watched with fascination the way Will seemed so calm, but was still stressed and panicky. It wasn't easy to tell, especially not in the dark, but Mike could see the same old signs he was used to, the jitteriness- Will had been fidgeting and bouncing his leg for the past ten minutes, Mike noted -the isolation, the smoking even. It was something Will rarely did, or at least the Will Mike knew rarely did.

It was a last resort before the stress broke him down.

Will could feel Mike watching him, and resisted the crawling feeling under his skin to say something, to make Mike aware of Will's own awareness. He instead connected the stars in unique constellations, making his own up as he watched smoke curl up silently into the sky.

Mike sighed, he'd been watching Will for almost twenty minutes, and there was still no sign that Will had seen him. He straightened out from leaning on the railing, and decided to slip back into the warm party, where nobody knew what he'd done, and nobody could talk about it.

If he'd looked while he left, he would've seen sharp green eyes following him inside.

### 3. Chapter 3, or the one with the stars

#### Notes for the Chapter:

hahahaha,, ,,, im so sorry its been so long

Their third, fourth, fifth, and other continual encounters were often small, maybe walking past each other in the hallway, or peer reviewing some work for a class for each other. It was strictly formal, strictly short conversation, and every day that it continued, Mike felt his guts tightening more and more. He didn't want their relationship ('friendship', he'd correct himself whenever he would try to tell someone about it.) to be this way forever, he missed the way Will used to talk to him.

Mike knew he shouldn't let it get to him, but as he tried to focus on his coursework, he found himself staring out of the window. He stared at the stars for no particular reason, he told himself, though he knew that was a total lie. He watched the sky, with tiny pinpricks glimmering millions of miles away, missing a tiny body next to him excitedly pointing out constellations and stars. His mind slowly slid back to one of those nights they had spent on Will's porch together.

*Mike shivered underneath the thin blanket wrapped around his shoulders like a cape, knees curled into his chest in an attempt to regain any of the lost body heat that he could get back. Will came through the back door a moment later, carrying a book. It was almost the size of a vinyl record casing, and paperback. The primary colors of the cover were blue and black, but Mike could see constellations etched in the cover with silver paint. Will was carrying his own blanket, slung over his shoulder casually as he climbed down to where Mike was.*

*"You have a book?" Mike asked as Will wrapped the blanket around his own shoulders and curled close to him. Mike suddenly didn't need the blanket as much, hoping Will couldn't see the pink dusted across his cheeks in the dark.*

*"Yeah! I've had it for a while, it's really cool!" The smaller boy quickly*

flipped through each of the pages, excitedly chattering about the different constellations and information in the book. Mike couldn't concentrate on what he was saying. As Will spoke, he got more and more excited, and Mike could see it on his face, his dark eyes glittering excitedly, face flushed from the cold weather. Mike couldn't help but stare at him, wondering distantly why his face felt hot and why his heart suddenly seemed to be beating so hard and arrhythmic. Mike moved closer to Will, who faltered for a moment in surprise, face turning an even darker pink than it used to be. Mike wondered if the cold really was the reason why his face had been flushed before.

"S'cold." Mike offered through chattering teeth as an explanation, and Will swallowed before nodding hesitantly. He pressed on about his book, albeit slower.

"It's clear tonight, so we should be able to see Orion at least!" Will said, his previous composure returning. He stood from their spot on the porch and loosely took Mike's wrist in his hand, pulling him into the yard.

"How do you know which one is Orion?" Mike asked, trying to take his mind off of the way his skin prickled underneath Will's grasp.

"There should be three stars in a row, then like, 2 trapezoids coming out from there." Will said, dropping Mike's hand to leaf through the book again.

Mike walked in a circle, looking at the sky for anything that resembled Will's description. Behind him, Will chirped excitedly, moving next to Mike so he could show the taller boy the diagram of the constellation. Their shoulders bumped together, and immediately Mike's face exploded with dark red fire. He felt it burning all the way behind his ears. Will was pointing out Orion's belt, and Mike looked at it, but his mind was fuzzy like radio static. He felt sick as he thought about it, knowing that it probably meant that Will meant more to him than a friend probably should. Mike wanted to enjoy the warmth and fuzziness in his stomach and head whenever he was around Will, but he'd heard the things Will was called. He heard the way the people of Hawkins talked about people who weren't straight, people like himself, Mike thought. The butterflies that had started to congregate in his stomach suddenly turned into acid and concrete, and he felt his throat start to close as he realized what these feelings meant. Will continued to talk about the stars, pointing out



*constellations like Pegasus and Draco and Cassiopeia excitedly, giving Mike the backstory for each.*

*Will was so excited that Mike could feel his heart crack, realizing that he wasn't.. normal. He wasn't like the other boys, not like Lucas or Dustin or any of the other boys in their class who had crushes on the girls and talked about who was pretty and who they would want to date. They talked about which of the girls was the cutest or hottest, who they would want to be friends with and eventually start dating. Mike would rather talk about the cute boy in the back of his geometry class who made him blush every time they accidentally bumped into each other. Mike would rather talk about the way Will's smile and soft voice and gentleness made his heart jump like it was trying to escape from his chest, but he couldn't. He couldn't because everyone around him called "those people" disgusting, claimed that there was something wrong with their brains. Even his own parents seemed uncomfortable at the thought of boys loving boys and girls loving girls (though thankfully, Nancy seemed to lean more in favor towards gay people, and sometimes Mike wondered about her and Barb, but that wasn't important now.) Mike wondered if Will thought about the same things, if Will was straight, and everything Mike felt was just wishful thinking on his part.*

*Will kept pulling him around the yard, pointing out his favorite stars and even catching a comet and a shooting star every now and then. Mike wasn't watching the sky, he was watching Will. They stayed outside until their fingers were numb and they were shivering so hard they could barely speak through their chattering teeth. Giggling, they ran inside to warm up, drinking hot chocolate from mugs clutched close to their chests.*

*Mike found himself smiling at the memory as he pinpointed various constellations through the window. He was still able to find Orion and Cassiopeia, and he felt something heavy in his chest as he thought about how he would never be able to have a moment like that with Will ever again. He sighed, trying to pull himself back to his work, but all he could think about was the absence of Will's warm presence. Mike pushed his books across the desk, standing suddenly. A surge of motivation shot from the top of his head to the tips of his toes. He could fix it, he just had to talk Will into realizing that Mike had just made a mistake, he wanted Will back. Before the motivation could fade and Mike could chicken out, he rushed out of his dorm*

room and practically ran downstairs.

He rushed down the hallway, trying not to run so he wouldn't be out of breath while trying to apologize to Will. He came to Will's door, and immediately, the motivation that had propelled him downstairs started to quickly fade. He took a deep breath, but his hands began to shake, and he knew his voice would too. Steeling himself one last time, he raised his fist to knock on the door. He hesitated, feeling his throat start to close again before forcing himself to knock. He rocked on his heels waiting for Will to open the door. A moment of silence passed before the door opened to reveal Will, hair a mess, hazel-green eyes a stormy gray with anger.

"We need to talk."

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

legit the most cliché ending ever sorry YyY

hmu on tumblr to yell at me or talk to me about this  
@uppercasebread

also i don't particularly ship barb and nancy but both  
mike and nancy are bi and will and barb are both  
gay sorry i don't make the rules

## 4. Chapter 4

The moment the sentence came out of his mouth, Mike regretted it. His heart started to pound so hard it made his hands shake. His throat tightened and he felt like he was about to puke. Why did he ever think this was a good idea? Will stared at him from behind the door, and the silence that stretched between them only made Mike's condition worse. He was about to turn tail and run back to his own dorm when Will finally moved, slinking back into his dorm and leaving the door open. Mike took that as an invitation to follow him, and quietly crept inside, shutting the door softly behind him.

As he closed the door, Mike tried to take in as much of Will's dorm room as possible, as he wasn't sure if he would ever see it again ( a small part of him wondered if he'd ever make it out of the room alive). The fluorescent lights in the ceiling buzzed, painting everything an over-saturated yellow. Will's room was kind of small and cramped, but not in a bad way, it was more cozy than claustrophobic. Mike noticed how organized everything was, there was a place for everything, even though most of it wasn't put away. Paintbrushes and pencils covered the desk in the corner, and papers were scattered across the floor in front of the bed, which had no frame. Photographs and paintings practically covered the dorm wall to wall, mainly landscapes and what looked like practice sketches of the college campus. Will stood in the middle, somehow seeming perfectly fit for the room. He was leaning against the wall, arms crossed, staring at Mike. Mike felt the same anxiety bubble back up in his chest, he hated the way Will looked at him, like he was one of those ugly black slugs that had tormented him years ago.

"So?" Will asked, eyebrows raised.

"I- what?" Mike stuttered, he had forgotten why he'd come, his gut was twisted into a circle, making him want to cry. His heart had started to pound again, making his legs feel shaky and empty. Will sighed, and rolled his eyes. Mike felt like throwing up again.

"You said we needed to talk?" Will gestured with his hand in a

kind of 'go on' motion, and suddenly everything came back to Mike.

"Right!" Mike swallowed thickly, why was this so hard? "Right, um. I just- wanted to, um, apologize? for- for, everything. I just- I've been thinking about it a lot recently, and I don't want- I'm not- I just, feel like-" Mike growled, why couldn't he just say what he wanted? With a deep breath, he started over. "What I'm trying to say," He said slowly. "Is that I messed up, I shouldn't have walked out on you, and I only did it because, um, I was too scared to tell you that I-" Mike started to choke. He wasn't ready for this, he didn't know why he even tried. Nonetheless, he pushed on. "I'm bi. sexual. bisexual." He facepalmed internally. What an idiot. He tried to steady his breathing as Will stared at him in silence.

"Um, so, I guess I just wanted to say that I don't hate you? or anything? I just, couldn't face the facts I guess" Mike chuckled humorlessly. "But I really miss-"

"Why are you messing with me?" Will cut him off. Mike was stunned into silence.

"W-what?" Mike took a step back as Will pushed himself off the wall, moving to start cleaning up the dorm. The contrast between what he'd said and his nonchalance knocked Mike's mind off balance.

"You heard what I said. Why are you messing with me? Who put you up to this? Troy? Does he even go here? Doesn't matter, they all feel the same." Will said bitterly, and Mike couldn't think of anything to say, the mood had shifted so suddenly.

"I'm not messing with you." Mike protested weakly.

"Yeah, right. Everyone here knows about me. I get it enough from strangers, 'there goes the queer, off to fuckin, blow a dude or something!'" Will mimicked, voice cracking. Mike could see him slowly wearing down.

"Will, I'm serious. I'm not messing with you. I just wanted to try to fix things because I missed being able to talk to you!" Mike tried moving closer, but Will backed away, stiffening with his hands clenched into fists at his sides.

"Not you. Anyone but you." Will said softly, voice shaking. His eyes were glassy. He stumbled backwards until he was leaning against his bed on the floor.

"What?" Mike asked softly, trying to calm Will down. Slowly moving to sit in front of Will, Mike made eye contact. "What do you mean 'not me?'"

"I could deal with anyone messing with me," Will said softly, almost to himself. He was staring through Mike, eyes almost dead. "Except for you. Please don't do this."

"Will, I don't understand, I'm not messing with you. I'm serious. I'm really bisexual, I really miss talking to you, I want to see you more. And I really- I really like you." Mike said, and the life seemed to return to Will a little bit. He stared at Mike, before suddenly launching himself forwards and hugging Mike tightly, sobbing into his shirt.

Mike didn't know what had happened to cause Will to break down this suddenly. Will had his face buried in Mike's chest, and his hands tangled in Mike's shirt. Mike tried quieting him, rocking back and forth gently, and petting Will's hair. They stayed like that for what felt like hours, and Will sobbed until no more tears would come out of his eyes and his breathing slowly settled down to normal.

"Are you gonna be alright if I let go?" Mike asked softly, continuing to pet Will's hair gently.

Will nodded, hands still entwined in Mike's shirt. Mike gently leaned back until he was able to make eye contact with Will. Will's eyes were red and puffy, and there were red blotches here and there on his face. He kept himself wrapped around Mike, but he was silent. His hair was a mess now, both from Mike running his fingers through it and from Will having his head buried in Mike's chest.

"I probably look like a drug addict." Will said softly, his voice scratchy from tears. Mike chuckled softly, running his hands through Will's hair again.

"Only a little." He said. Will looked like he was falling asleep at Mike's touch, eyelids drooping.

Mike continued to play with Will's hair as he started to drift off, exhaustion finally setting in as Will leaned closer, sitting in a similar position to the one they had just been in. After a few minutes of

silence, Will was silent and his breathing had slowed down significantly. Mike sighed once he was sure Will was asleep, gently picking him up and moving him to his bed. He sat next to the bed for a moment, wondering if this was a one-time thing or if everything was starting to return to normal. He waited for a moment before standing to leave, deciding that staying would probably be weird, and worrying that when he woke up the next morning, all of this would be a dream and Will would still hate him. He quickly left, shutting the door softly behind him and practically running back to his dorm, excitement bubbling in his stomach.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

LKJSAHFALKJSDF this was sposed to end w them  
kissing but I ran out of time SORRY LOL

SORRY THIS ONE IS REALLY REALLY TERRIBLE  
HGHGHHHHGHGHDJGSKJGH

k theres an epilogue coming

EDIT: I added a Better Ending but this is still terrible  
lmao

## 5. hhhhhhhhOUHOUH

kjhfkfjhkhJHKDJFHKDFJGH

i . am so sorry for never updating this lmao i kind of lost motivation for it and still dont love it BUT hopefully ill be able to just . write something else for u guys so that u can read more sweet sweet non nsfw byeler stuff but uh. im gonna be honest this big boy is done with mainly because i dont like the way it was written, and it was kinda confusing so djflskjflksjdf

but that doesnt mean ill never post again on here!!

### **Author's Note:**

Wowiwoowowowoeowoeow

Fun fun

I wrote this really fast it's probably really bad!!!!!!  
Oops I don't,,,,, rly care I'm adding more (like 3/4 chapters tops) and it's mainly for me!!!! Sorry if u don't like it lmao